



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

February 27.

Rev. B. LLOYD, D. D., Provost, T. C. D., President,
in the Chair.

Mr. Petrie read a paper, being an account of a valuable Irish MS. belonging to the Earl of Roden, (of which a transcript has been recently made for the Academy, under the direction of Mr. Petrie, by Mr. Eugene Curry,) with a biographical notice of its author.

This MS., which is of great celebrity among Irish scholars and historians, was compiled between the years 1650 and 1664, by Duaid Mac Firbis, from various ancient historical works many of which are now lost, and contains the most complete historical account of the several tribes who made settlements in Ireland and Scotland, with genealogies of all the principal families descended from them. Its compiler was the last of the hereditary antiquaries of Lecan Mac Firbis, in the county of Sligo, by whom the celebrated MS. called the Book of Lecan, now in the Library of the Academy, was compiled in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and it is a valuable supplement to the genealogical portion of that great work, the pedigrees being, in most instances, continued down to the time of the writer. It also contains a vast quantity of matter not to be found in any other works, as historical and topographical poems, &c., but particularly an account of the Danish and Anglo-Norman families, which is of inestimable value.

The MS. is a small thick quarto on paper, containing about 1000 pages, and is wholly in the hand-writing of Mac Firbis, with the exception of a small portion in the hand-writing of Michael O'Clery, the chief of the celebrated annalists popularly called the Four Masters. The transcript made for the Academy agrees in every respect with the original, with which it has been compared most carefully by

Mr. O'Donovan. It is, however, more perfect; as many chasms caused by stains and other injuries have been supplied from abstracts of the work made by the compiler himself, and many corrections and much additional matter found in those abstracts have been inserted. The Academy's transcript may therefore be considered the only perfect copy of the work now existing.

Professor Lloyd read a note on the Aurora Borealis of the 18th inst., of which the following is an extract:—

“At a quarter past ten o'clock, on the night of the 18th inst., my attention was called to a remarkable ruddy appearance in the eastern part of the sky, which, at first view, seemed to arise from the reflexion of a fire. On a more attentive examination, however, it was soon evident that the appearance was purely meteoric. It was, in fact, an auroral phenomenon, though of a very peculiar kind.

“It was bright moonlight, and Mars had just appeared after his occultation by the moon. The sky was entirely without clouds; but the northern, eastern, and western segments were covered with a curtain of diffused Aurora, resembling a luminous vapour. This curtain was lifted from the horizon on the east and west, and exhibited a deep blue sky. But the distinguishing appearance was, that large masses of this light, especially towards the east and north-east, were of a *blood-red* colour, which presented a vivid contrast to the blue of the sky beneath. A large patch of this red light, about 40° from the horizon to the eastward, was the most remarkable. It continued distinctly visible for upwards of half an hour; and its motion was so rapid that in this time it had advanced from about due east to a point nearly south-east.

There was a mass of *white* streamers to the north, which reached nearly to the zenith, and pointed somewhere between the magnetic and due north. At half past ten o'clock,

a brilliant and well defined stream of light of the blood-red colour appeared a little to the south of west, and seemed to be a disjointed portion of the eastern red mass. A few minutes after its appearance, a large mass of white auroral light began to rise rapidly from the northern horizon; at the same time the northern streamers became much more vivid, and took a fan-like appearance, converging to a point not far from the zenith. There was no appearance, however, of *Corona*. Shortly after, (about 10^h. 40'), a portion of the light of these streamers, about midway between α Ursæ and Polaris, assumed the unusual blood-red tint, and continued of this colour for several minutes.

"Before 11 o'clock all the peculiar appearances had nearly gone; and there remained nothing but the faint luminous clouds, with light streamers to the N. N. W. These streamers were still playing at 12 o'clock, and extended from the zenith to within about 30° of horizon.

"The thermometer stood at 38° fahr., and the barometer at 29.786 inches. The wind was dry and piercing."*

* The following note, by Mr. Bergin, supplies the account of the early part of the phenomenon :—

"On alighting at the Dunleary station at 7 o'clock, (from the Railway,) we observed a magnificently coloured crimson Aurora as a broad mass to the westward; and our first impression for a moment was, that it was the light from one of the engine furnaces reflected from a cloud of steam. It extended from near the horizon towards the zenith, with frequent flashes or streamers within itself. From the main mass, round by the north, and onward to the east, the whole sky had a crimson or carmine tint; and were it not for the brilliant moon (near the full) I do believe the splendour would have equalled any I have ever heard of. * * * * The Aurora assumed the general appearance of an arch; the first observed mass to the westward being one leg which faded away toward the zenith, where there was a steady circular patch of great brilliancy of colour, and from thence, separated by a small interval, was a faint limb descending to the eastern horizon. * * * * These appearances continued with scarcely any change till near 8 o'clock. About 9 o'clock the general appearances were much the same, save that the eastern limb of the arch was not visible, and the western much more intensely coloured, and like a steady column. * * * * Throughout, its limits had been well defined; and it was perfectly transparent, stars of the third, and perhaps the fourth magnitude being seen through it."

Professor Lloyd read a note on a new electrical phenomenon.

The Rev. J. H. Todd, F. T. C. D., gave a short account of a MS. of the four Gospels, of the seventh century and in Irish characters, which is preserved in the Library of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth. The volume is a small quarto, in the minute hand called *Caroline*, common to all Europe in the reign of Charlemagne, but now used only in Ireland, and known as the Irish character. The present volume appears to have belonged to Maelbrigid Mac Dornan, or Mac Tornan, who was Archbishop of Armagh in the ninth century, and died A. D. 925. By him it was probably sent as a present to Athelstan, King of the Anglo-Saxons, who presented it to the city of Canterbury. These facts are inferred from the following inscription in Anglo-Saxon characters, (and in a hand of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century,) which occurs on a blank page immediately following the genealogy in the first chapter of St. Matthew.

✠ MÆIELBRIDVS. MAC.
 DVRNANI. ISTVM. TEXTVM.
 PER. TRIQVADRṼM. DŌ.
 DIGNE. DOGMATIZAT.
 ✠ AST. AETHELSTANVS.
 ANGLOSÆXANA. REX. ET.
 RECTOR. DORVERNENSI.
 METROPOLI. DAT. PER. ÆVVM.

The former part of this inscription Mr. Todd professed himself unable to translate to his own satisfaction. *Textus*, in the Latinity of the middle ages, is a term frequently employed to denote the Four Gospels; but *dogmatizare*, in the same dialect, is generally used in a bad sense, *to assert erroneous or heretical opinions*, a signification which it cannot well bear here: *triquadrus*, when used as an adjective,

is equivalent to *tripartitus*, *trisected*, and its use as a substantive is rare.

The mention of Maelbrigid Mac Dornan, in connexion with the present volume, might be relied upon as sufficient evidence of its Irish origin; but there is proof of this fact still more conclusive. In the lower margin of the page, which contains the account of our Lord being compelled to bear his cross, (from ver. 24 to 32 inclusive, of the 27th chapter of St. Matthew,) there is the following note in the Irish language, and in the hand-writing of the original scribe:

mōr agárara f coimda njme ʒ talman

The second word is probably a contraction for *agaranar ra*, or as it would now be spelt, *eaononj ra*; the whole therefore, in modern orthography and without contractions, is to be read as follows:

Μορ eaononj ra fōr coimda njme agar talman.

Great dishonour this to the God of heaven and earth.

The discovery of this MS., and the satisfactory proof which these facts afford of its Irish origin, are important, as adding another to the many instances with which we are already acquainted, of the employment of Irish scribes in the transcription of the Scriptures during the sixth and seventh centuries. It is now well ascertained that almost all the sacred books so highly venerated by the Anglo-Saxon Church, and left by her early bishops as heirlooms to their respective sees, were obtained from Ireland, or written by Irish scribes.

DONATIONS.

The Mining Review, and Journal of Geology, Mineralogy, and Metallurgy. Conducted by Henry English, Esq., F. G. S., &c. No. IX. (New Series.) Presented by the Editor.